## ABSTRACT

The present invention provides a method for producing an optically active  $\beta$ -hydroxy ester compound represented by the general formula:

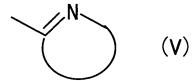
$$R^4$$
  $R^5$   $CO_2R^3$  (III)

wherein

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R<sup>1</sup> represents an optionally substituted hydrocarbon group and the like,

 $R^2$  represents a nitrogen-containing heterocyclic group different from  $R^1$ , which is represented by the general formula:

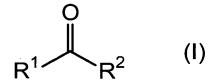


wherein the ring may be substituted and the like,

 $$\rm R^3$$  represents an optionally substituted hydrocarbon group  $$\rm 15$$  and the like,

 $\mbox{\ensuremath{R^4}}$  and  $\mbox{\ensuremath{R^5}}$  represent, the same or different, a hydrogen atom, a halogen atom and the like,

the symbol "\*" represents an optically active center, which comprises reacting in the presence of a cinchona alkaloid and the like a compound represented by the general formula:



wherein  ${\bf R}^1$  and  ${\bf R}^2$  are as defined above with a compound represented by the general formula:

$$X \xrightarrow{Zn} CO_2R^3$$
 (II)

5 wherein  $R^3$ ,  $R^4$  and  $R^5$  are as defined above, and X is a halogen atom.